

CHUNG TAI ZEN CENTER OF SUNNYVALE

750 East Arques Avenue, Sunnyvale, California

Project Description and Justification

(1) Brief Project Description

The Chung Tai Zen Center of Sunnyvale (CTZCS) will be relocating to 750 E. Arques Avenue, Sunnyvale. There will be no change in the appearance of the existing building.

CTZCS is basically a Zen meditation, and education resource center with administrative office. We provide information and resource related to Zen meditation, including distribution of printed material, such as magazines, books, tapes, cassettes, CDs, etc to the public.

Through Zen meditation, we promote public educational services to the community for spiritual optimum health, personal growth, spiritual fulfillment, positive life attitude, caring relationship, and compassion for self and others.

The Center offers Zen meditation to the public for the cultivation of virtues, harmony; we also disseminate Buddha's teaching of nonviolence, empowerment of a balanced life, and the practice of self-realization and selflessness.

The Center primarily targets its services to high-tech professionals, entrepreneurs, and community residents. Zen meditation can provide relief for people who are in stress; it can calm down people's busy mind to attain peace and wisdom. It is very beneficial for people who work in the high tech industry or business with tense schedule and high level of stress from work. Our services are open to the public and they are free of charge. Our expenses are supported by private donations without any government fundings.

(2) Description of Daily Uses

Days of Operation:

Tuesday – Friday 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

There will be about 12 staff/volunteers. During this period of time, most people may walk in for inquiry, gather information about Zen meditation and Buddhist philosophy, video viewing, or use the research library for reading. Our staff will perform administrative duties, such as answering phone calls, performing data entry, filing, etc.

Tuesday – Friday 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

There will be evening prayer and chanting service. The Center will conduct one or two meditation classes. Service and classes will only be conducted by Buddhist monks. There

are a total of 3 Buddhist monks at the Center. Each class will have 25 attendees, and most activities will be in the evenings or weekends.

Saturday – Sunday 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.

There will be Sunday service, and sometimes, special lectures on topic of interest to the public, such as anger management, life management, and history and practice of Zen, etc. Special lectures are not regularly scheduled. Group meditation lecture or instruction will be given if needed at the Zen Hall where it can hold up to 70 people maximum. The number of maximum attendees will strictly compile with city requirements.

The Center will be closed on Monday.

(3) Quiet Operation

Zen meditation is a quiet operation. All meetings will be conducted in a very quiet way, since meditation requires concentration, mindfulness, and self-reflection.

(4) Use

The administrative office is in operation during the midweek. All congregational related activities will occur within off-peak hours during the week and on weekends.

(5) Traffic/Parking

Most Center's activities are to be off hours or during weekends. The after hour traffic is very light. There is public bus line along the Fair Oaks Avenue, and we encourage people carpooling to come to the Center. Majority of the attendees are adults.

The site is located at the mixed residential and research and development/office businesses area. The impact of traffic should be minimal, and the traffic S/B at Fair Oaks Avenue is light after peak hours, hence, parking should not be a problem.

(6) Annual Event

For the Annual Event of Buddha's Birthday, people will be coming to pay homage to Buddha at different time for an estimate total of 220 people spreading out from morning to afternoon.

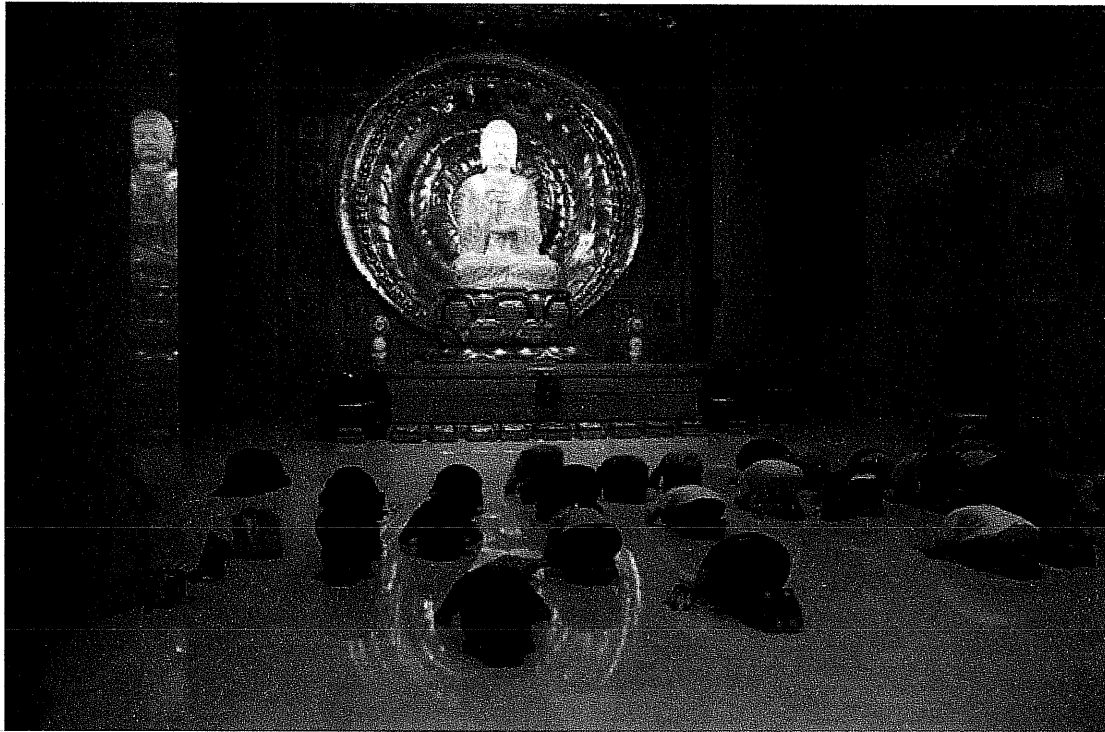
Please Note:

As mentioned above, there are only 3 Buddhist clergy at the Center, when service or meditation conducted at the Zen Hall, there will not be other activities at the classrooms. Fellowship Hall/Cafeteria will not be used simultaneously when service ceremony is in progress at the Zen Hall. The Cafeteria only will be used when the ceremony is finished, and also not all attendees will stay after the ceremony.

Description of the Five Main Areas of the Sunnyvale Zen Center

Buddha Hall

The Buddha Hall (on the left side of the main entrance) serves as the first stopping place for devotees and visitors after entering the Zen Center/Buddhist monastery. Devotees will pay homage to the Buddha here; visitors will receive a brief welcome. However, this is not an assembly area; typically each person stays only a few minutes. It also serves as three-way passage corridor to other main areas such as Zen Hall, Lecture Hall, and cafeteria. The Buddha Hall needs to be spacious for the visitors to experience the quiet and contemplative aura, having just come in from the clamors of the outside world.



Zen Hall

Sunnyvale Zen Center, being of Zen (Chan) School of Buddhism lineage, the first and foremost emphasis is SITTING meditation (usually with breathing practice). Through meditation, our students can mentally lay down all the worldly chores and worries and focus on attaining peace/tranquility inwardly. Therefore, specially designed wide wooden stools (2' x 2'7" x height of 2'3") are provided for each student. In addition, we need large walking space on four sides of the hall for students to do WALKING meditation (circling the hall) after sitting meditation. The students/participants should be separated from each other with comfortable distance, because a crowded Zen Hall defeats the purpose of silent meditation. We offer several Zen Buddhism classes a

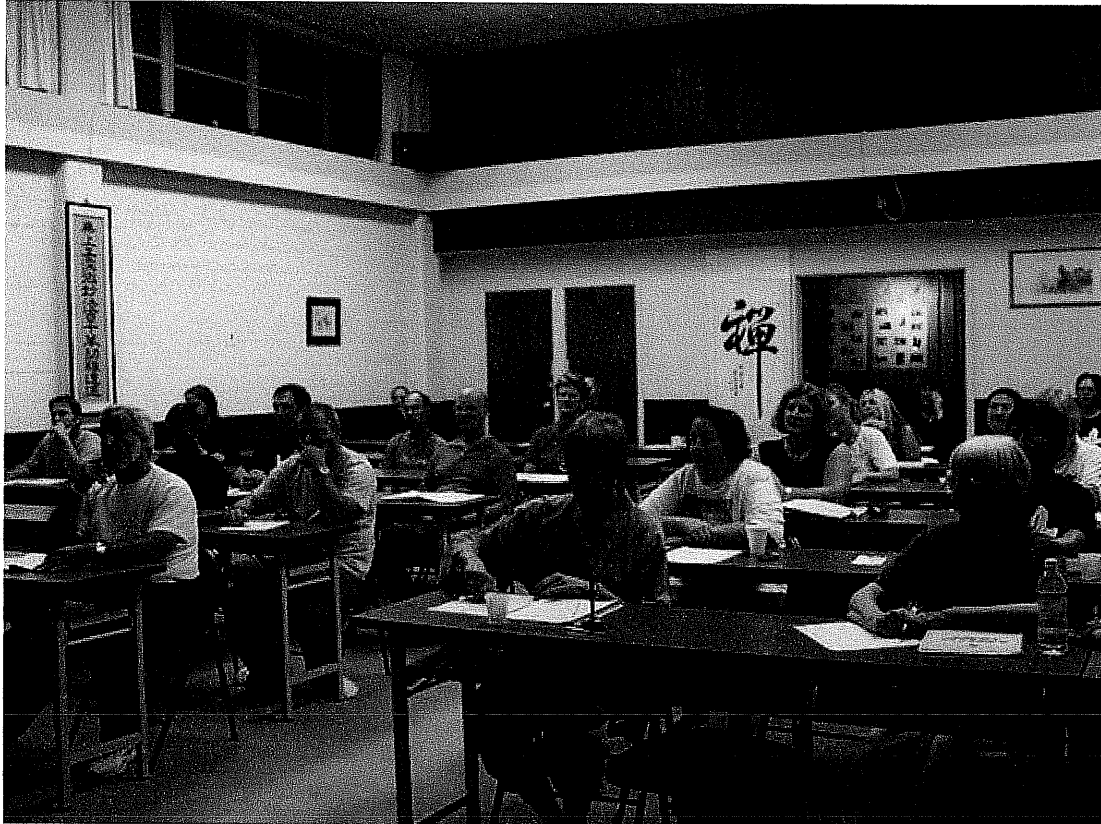
week, each 2-hour long. The first hour is meditation in the Zen Hall, the second hour the people are moved to the lecture hall for a talk on Buddhism & discussion.





Lecture Hall

The second session of every class is always conducted in the lecture hall after students finish meditation. ONLY Dharma masters (Buddhist priests qualified to teach Buddhism) will impart the knowledge of Buddhism to the disciples/students. Topics may include spiritual wisdom and enlightenment; dealing with human suffering, stress, anger, and greed; ways of attaining inner peace, and how to apply the Zen teaching to daily life.



Cafeteria

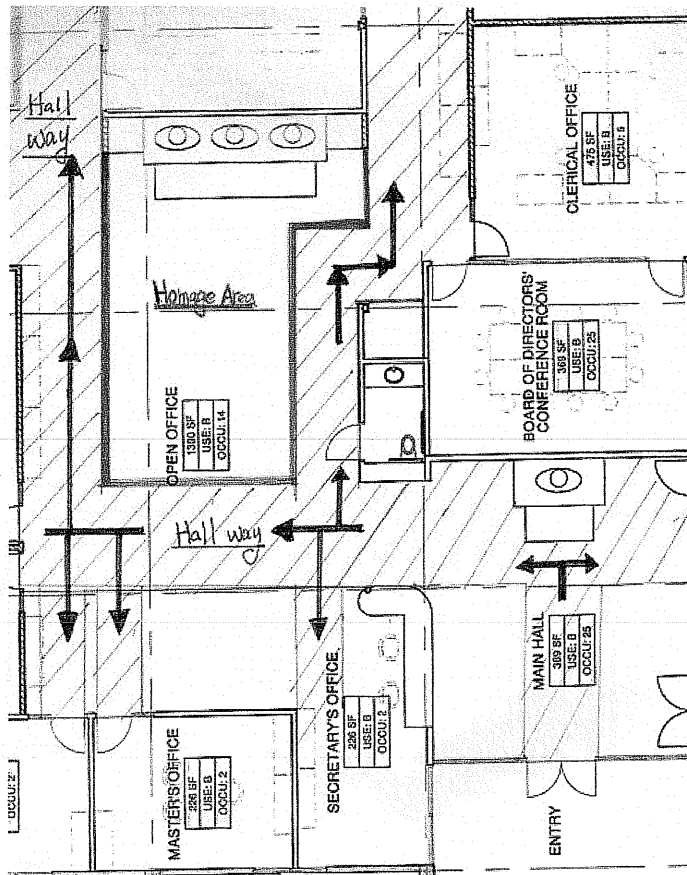
In Zen Buddhism, the 7th factor of the Noble Eightfold Path is Right Mindfulness: to live in a mindful way including a person's SITTING, WALKING, BREATHING, AND EATING in freedom and peace. Right Mindfulness is the complete awareness of the movements of one's body and mind, and of the environment in which one lives. This leads to joy and inner peace. A Zen master once said, "when you walk, just walk; when you eat, just eat." Learning to be mindful while having silent meals is also a Zen practice.

PLEASE NOTE: The Zen Hall, Lecture Hall, and the Cafeteria serve the same group of people as part of the Zen training, which requires step by step learning and

practicing involving different activities. Therefore, one space will be used each time by the same group of people.

Display Area/Lobby

This is the area between the Zen Hall and the Cafeteria. This area is like a lobby where, between classes, people take break and do their sharing of what they have learned, and to gather casually and talk informally. We may display some posters on the wall illustrating Buddha's life or information about our monasteries, so it is also an area where we can give a guided tour to our visitors (when Zen classes are not in session, otherwise it will affect the meditation).

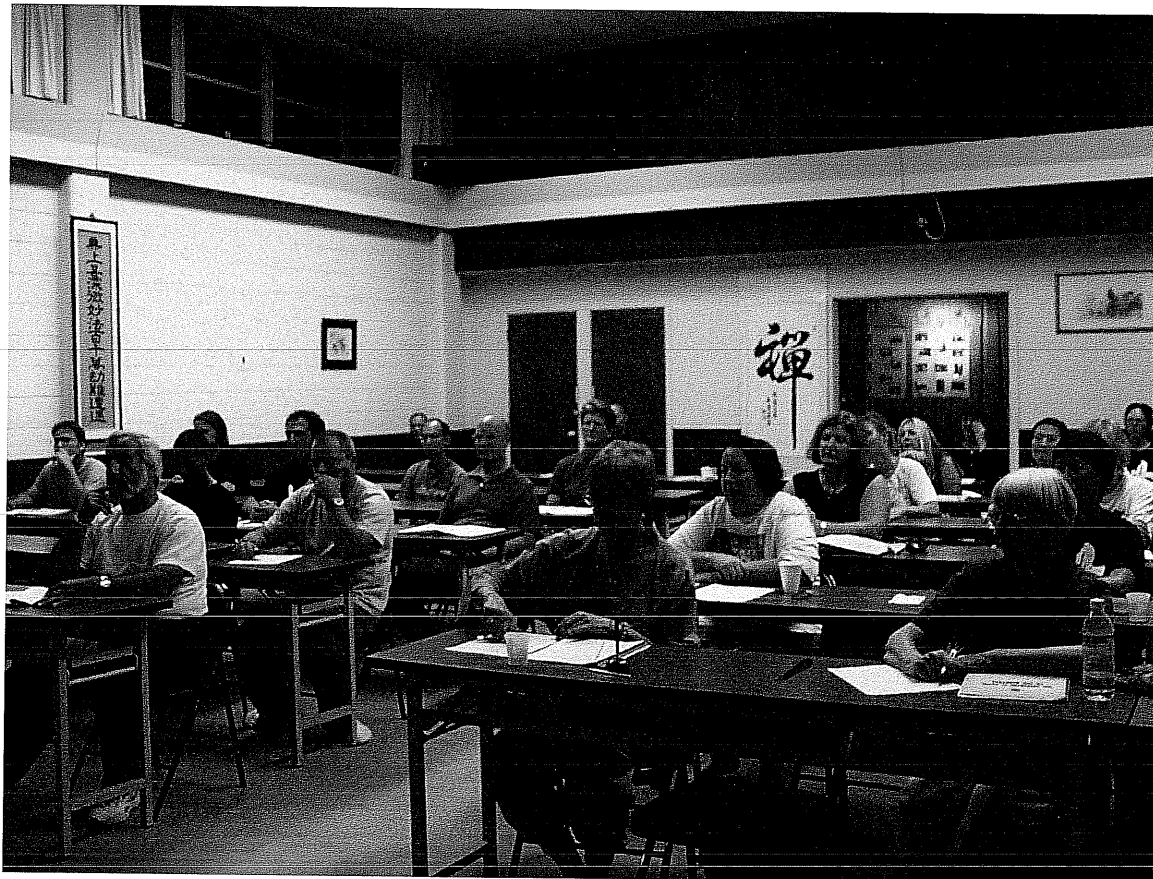


Chung Tai Zen Center of Sunnyvale:
A Buddhist Church and a Center of Spiritual Learning and Practice

Justification for Requesting Living Quarters for Monastics inside the Zen Center

- In the 2,500 year history of Buddhism, both in the origination country of India, and to the areas it spread to such as China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Tibet, and other countries, Buddhist monastics (monks or nuns) have always lived inside the monastery (in the same building as the main temple or in the same complex, similar to that in Catholicism).
- Buddhist monastics are celibate, they do not marry, they leave their secular families to devote their life to the spiritual practice and teaching of Buddhism, as in Catholic monastics. Therefore, their lives are a life of spirituality that revolve around the monastery, as opposed to lay ministers who must also attend to a personal family life.
- There are different types of Buddhist monasteries, some focus on the training of monastics, some are for private secluded practices, some place more emphasis on the teaching of Buddhism and providing religious services to the community. While providing services to the Buddhist community, it is also a facility for the resident monastics' private spiritual practice (including meditation, studying scriptures, daily services, etc.)
- While the Zen Center welcomes people of all faiths (or no faith), and our Zen Buddhism classes, services, and workshop programs are provided free of charge as a service to the community, we find the regular participants are the curious yet serious practitioners who really want to apply Zen meditation and Buddhism to their daily activities. They come to the Zen Center to learn and develop their understanding of this teaching of peace, wisdom, harmony, and spiritual liberation. It is a center of spiritual learning and practice that serves the needs of local Buddhists as well as anyone who are interested in the teachings of Zen Buddhism. The Center will also foster multi-cultural understanding and interfaith dialogues.
- Chung Tai Zen Center of Sunnyvale has operated for one year in the current address (1031 N. Fair Oaks) on rented office space. Due to city regulations the three resident monks have had to live in an apartment nearby and drive to the Zen Center daily. It has been very disruptive of the traditional monastic way of life of simplicity, being more costly, having to deal with more secular affairs, and taking a toll on our communal spiritual practice. We will definitely respect the city's regulations in this regard, but we do hope that the City will consider our request to have living quarters inside the Zen Center for the reasons listed above. We deeply appreciate your time and concern on this matter.

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